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ABSTRACT

A 1985 AFL-CIO report suggested that the steep decline in union affiliation among members of the working class might be related to the ways in which public schools shape student opinions on organized labor. During the Progressive era, labor educators and activists were also concerned that the civic education being provided working-class children in the public school system was prejudicial to the labor movement. In the wake of the AFL-CIO report, labor studies scholars began to examine the marginal place held by their field in the formal curriculum of public education. Richard J. Altenbaugh has identified a lack of communication among scholars in the fields of labor history and educational history. This paper examines and discusses the Manumit School, which was founded in 1924 in Pawling, New York, by William and Helen Fincke. Manumit was described by its supporters as representing an alliance of progressive labor and progressive education. The school was rooted in the traditions and practices of progressive education and workers' education. Manumit shared several characteristics with other Progressive-era alternative schools, but was distinguished by the open alliance with the labor movement and by its early commitment to what was later referred to as social reconstructionism. Includes 33 notes. (BT)

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Labor's Demonstration School: The Manumit School for Workers' Children, 1924-1932

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the History of Education Society (Chicago, 1998)

Introduction

In his study of the cultural history of the American working class during the mid-twentieth century, Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s (1994), historian George Lipsitz wrote that "[business] initiatives dominate the economic, political and social agenda of the nation, while labor's perspectives and needs remain almost invisible within most of the country's mainstream media and educational institutions." For decades, he continues, "business realities have been the only realities represented in politics, the media, and in education." Lipsitz's comments echo the contemporary conclusions drawn by the members of the Committee on the Evolution of Work of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), whose 1985 report, The Changing Situation of Workers and their Unions, suggested that the steep decline in union affiliation among members of the working class might be related to the ways in which public schools shape student opinions on organized labor. As was the case during the Progressive era, labor educators and activists were concerned that the civic education being provided to working-class children in the public school system was prejudicial to the labor movement.[1]

In the wake of this report, labor studies scholars began to examine the marginal place held by their field in the formal curriculum of public education. Their studies called both for increased attention to the influence that anti-labor bias in the schools might be having on the

rising generation of workers' feelings toward the labor movement and for increased support for the pro-labor "Labor in the Schools" programs that appeared in response to the AFL-CIO report. From this literature, one might conclude that the concern among labor activists for the education being provided to their children in the public schools was a new one. Labor activists and labor sympathizers, however, were as concerned about the social and political character of public education in the first decades of the twentieth century as they have been in the last. In fact, the AFL-CIO report simply capped a century's worth of study of anti-labor bias in the formal curriculum of American public schooling, as represented in the years immediately prior to the release of the report by the work of scholars such as Jean Anyon, Frances Fitzgerald and John Leffler.[2]

The literature in labor studies, however, shows little familiarity with this scholarship, or with the examples of educational criticism from the perspectives of labor and the left being discussed here today. This is another example of what historian Richard J. Altenbaugh has identified as an unfortunate lack of communication between scholars in the field of labor history and those in the field of educational history. Founded in 1924 in the midst of widespread social and educational criticism from the perspectives of labor and the left, the Manumit School was described by its supporters as representing "an alliance of progressive labor and progressive education." Manumit is one of several largely-forgotten episodes in the history of radical education in twentieth-century America and its study may do much not only to further illuminate the important relationship between labor history and educational history as complementary fields of endeavor, but also to suggest ways in which our understanding of educational experimentation outside the public sector during the Progressive era may be re-envisioned in such a way as to

bring episodes such as this one back within the parameters of mainstream scholarly discourse in our field.[3]

Labor's Criticism of Public Education During the Progressive Era

As a prelude to his study of the labor colleges of the 1920s and 1930s, Altenbaugh asks a simple question: "Why did many workers seemingly reject the formal educational system . . . to pursue their own educational alternatives?" As during other periods of popular experimentation with radical alternatives to public education, the Progressive era saw a variety of complaints lodged against the public school from a broad spectrum of social and political perspectives. Like other contemporary alternatives to public education, the Manumit School was rooted firmly in the soil of popular social and educational criticism during the Progressive era. Although a thorough review of the scope of these complaints is beyond the scope of this paper, a brief review of labor's criticism of public education during the period is necessary if we are to understand the immediate environment of educational criticism within which the Manumit School developed.[4]

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) began serious consideration of the issue of anti-labor bias in public education as early as 1903. As historian Philip R. V. Curoe has reported, a correspondent to the American Federationist had "complained that boys learned nothing in the public schools which was creditable to organized labor. He recommended that the labor unions hold lectures for school children, and particularly for the children of working men." By 1905, the AFL was endorsing such educational programs for working-class children and offering to provide curriculum materials for their use. Unwilling to abandon its longtime support of public education, however, the AFL recommended that such programs serve as a complement to the education being provided by the public school system. At the same time, the AFL launched a

systematic review of instructional materials to determine the extent of anti-labor bias in the public school curriculum. This idea of providing special programs for the children of the working class as a means of combating the social and political conservatism of public education proved popular enough during the first half of the twentieth century that a number of groups on the left developed after-school programs, summer camps, and a variety of extracurricular cultural activities for the children of their members.[5]

Over the next two decades, the AFL regularly renewed its call for educational reform. In addition to the removal of anti-labor bias in the curriculum, the AFL called for greater representation of the working class on boards of education, for increased pay for teachers, and for greater "security of position" for teachers who feared losing their jobs if they allowed any "controversial issues" (such as the labor movement) to be discussed in class. The AFL collected both its statements of support for the principle of public education and its suggestions for institutional reform in the 1922 pamphlet, Education for All. The following year, the AFL Committee on Education released the results of its study of the social studies curriculum in its report, Labor and Education (1923).[6]

Labor and Education reported the results of the AFL's analysis of over 100 social studies textbooks then in use in American classrooms. Finding a pattern of anti-labor bias in social studies curriculum materials, the report concluded that "selfish interests are seeking to use the school for propaganda purposes," among them, "industrial, commercial, and financial groups" such as the American Bankers' Association and the National Association of Manufacturers. Among the chief criticisms that the AFL made of the social studies curriculum in the public schools were the following: 1) that insufficient material was presented to allow students to form

a well-rounded view of the labor movement and of the social issues of particular interest to labor; 2) that textbooks were rife with "mis-statements of fact or misleading statements of fact" in regards to the history of the labor movement and to the role played by organized labor in American society; and, 3) that the curriculum placed an emphasis on the "abuses of trade unions to the exclusion of all other features" of the labor movement. Such consistently negative information in regards to organized labor, the report charged, "is bound to create an unfavorable and irremovable impression in the plastic mind of the child." True to its longtime commitment to public education, the AFL concluded its report with a call for a more well-rounded curriculum in the social studies, for the expulsion of "propaganda" from the schools, and for the protection of a teacher's right to discuss controversial social issues in the classroom without fear of reprisal.[7]

The charges of anti-labor bias in public education found in the AFL report were supported by a number of contemporary studies by radical intellectuals. In 1917, Scott Nearing reported that school boards were virtually devoid of representatives from the working class. In 1922, George S. Counts's study of the "selective character" of secondary education suggested that working-class students were hard-pressed to achieve social mobility through public education. In 1925, Horace Kallen concluded that social class bias was so pervasive in American education that the working class had become generally disillusioned with the public school as a social institution. Finally, Counts elaborated on Nearing's earlier study in 1927 and concluded not only that boards of education remained almost exclusively in the hands of the "favored classes," but that the movement toward "workers' education" that arose in the 1920s was directly related to these concerns and to organized labor's "growing distrust of the public school."[8]

"Workers' education" was the name given to a movement to provide alternative forms of education to working-class students; education that would be more attuned to the concerns of organized labor and to the role played by labor and the left in American society. Labor educators were less sanguine about the possibility of reform within the public school system than their counterparts in the AFL and advocated the development of parallel educational structures (such as alternative schools and colleges). Although the term "workers' education" is usually associated with adult education, there were several labor educators during the Progressive era who attempted to launch alternative educational programs for children that reflected the ideological commitment found in the workers' education programs for adults.[9]

One such educator was A. J. Muste, who served both as chairman of Brookwood Labor College and as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Manumit School during the 1920s and 1930s. Another longtime labor educator who lent her support to Manumit during its first decade was Fannia M. Cohn of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU). Writing on the necessity of "workers' education" for working-class children, Cohn expressed a sentiment common both to labor educators and to others concerned with the character of the education being provided for the children of the working class during the Progressive era: "It has been a sorrow to many an ardent trade unionist to see his children, brought up under influences alien to the labor movement, when grown, devoted to money-making and self-advancement, rather than to helping eradicate the evils in our social system." A public school education, dominated by what Lipsitz would refer to more than fifty years later as "business realities," was perceived by early twentieth-century labor activists not only as inadequate to their children's needs, but as a significant threat to the labor movement and to the "industrial democracy" that was among its

social goals during those years.[10]

Working-class concern with the social class bias of the public school system clearly contributed to the disillusionment with public education that found expression in the creation of the Manumit School in 1924. Equally important to Manumit supporters, however, was the criticism of public school pedagogy common to many elements of the broader progressive education movement. The AFL's Labor and Education noted not only the biased nature of public school teaching, but also its lack of creativity. The AFL supported the development of critical thinking skills in the students of the social studies, rather than continued reliance on the rote memorization of fact. According to the AFL, public school students should become acquainted with contemporary social problems through their education in the social studies and should be trained to "exercise their own critical faculties" in considering solutions to those problems.[11]

Similar concerns could be heard among more radical elements of the labor movement as well. Cohn, for example, wrote that advocates of workers' education "considered present-day educational methods inadequate for the development of well-rounded individuals," and charged that "[the] training given in the public schools tends to make the children passive, uncritical conformists, uncreative plodders." James H. Maurer, longtime leader of the Workers' Education Bureau, was even more blunt: "Our children are being trained like dogs and ponies, not developed as individuals." These concerns echoed those of contemporary progressive educators and curriculum theorists such as Harold O. Rugg, and continue to resonate in the ongoing debate over the teaching of the social studies in the public school. The founders and supporters of the Manumit School drew on both the radical criticism of social class bias in public education and the more common criticism of the general failings of public school teaching as they constructed

an educational alternative to the public school that could represent "an alliance of progressive labor and progressive education."[12]

Manumit

Labor activists and other early twentieth-century radicals were well aware of social class bias in the public school classroom by the time the AFL released its Labor and Education report in 1923. Writing about the Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike of 1912, radical activist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn described the anti-labor bias of the public schools. "The efforts of the . . . schools," she wrote, "were directed at driving a wedge between the school children and their striking parents." Maurer reported similar problems with the Pennsylvania schools in the early 1920s: "children have been led to feel that their own fathers, as active unionists, have been made the dupes of treasonable conspirators." Progressive educator Agnes Sailer reported the same in the wake of the 1929 textile strike in Marion, North Carolina. Strikers' children in Marion were not only forced to listen to lectures denouncing their parents' union activities, but were not allowed to present any pro-labor information to their classmates. Throughout the early twentieth century, the children of labor and the left faced profound difficulties as they attempted to reconcile the activism of their parents with the socially and politically conservative education that they received in the public schools. Many such children participated in formal educational programs designed specifically as radical alternatives to public education.[13]

One such alternative was the Manumit School, founded at Pawling, New York, in September 1924 by William and Helen Fincke, longtime labor supporters who had also been involved in the establishment of Brookwood Labor College three years earlier. Directed during its first decade by a coalition of labor leaders and progressive educators, Manumit was dedicated

to providing a progressive education to the children of the organized working class. Rooted in the traditions and practices of both progressive education and workers' education, Manumit shared several characteristics with other Progressive-era alternative schools, but was distinguished by its open alliance with the labor movement and by its early commitment to what would later be referred to as "social reconstructionism."[14]

Historian Katherine Moos Campbell has written that the communitarian tradition in American social experimentation had a significant effect on "experimental" schools such as Manumit during the Progressive era. Such schools embraced not only the Deweyan concept of the school as a "miniature community," but also the utopian concept of the school as a "model community." The communitarian influence is clearly evident in early Manumit literature, which promises teacher and student "a genuine community life," and which describes the school's potential contribution to a coming "world order based upon justice and co-operation, in which the individual may find freedom." Although Manumit embraced several familiar progressive innovations in both pedagogy and curriculum during its first decade, including the Dalton Plan and the Project Method, it was this commitment to the school as a model community and as the seedbed of future social change that lay at the heart of progressive education at Manumit and that best reflects the reconstructionist thinking that its founders and supporters inherited from the contemporary workers' education movement.[15]

The influence of the communitarian tradition was evident at a 1925 Progressive Education Association meeting, at which Manumit founder William M. Fincke concluded that "it is the life at Manumit rather than the 'academic work' which educates." Nellie M. Seeds, Fincke's successor as Manumit School director, agreed, writing that "[community] life is the

basis of Manumit's educational technique and cooperation is its watchword." Manumit literature identified three areas of education in which cooperation was to hold sway: discipline and governance, teaching methods, and choice of curriculum. Again owing to space, I will introduce each area only briefly.[16]

Manumit was "organized on the basis of community self-government." What this meant in practice was that both the school and the community were governed jointly by students and faculty through a regularly-held general school meeting. Longtime Manumit teacher Sally Cleghorn described this practice as being rooted in the tradition of the Quaker meeting and the idea of educational governance through democratic participation in decision-making was a distinctive characteristic of progressive education as it was practiced at Manumit during its first decade. Democratic participation in educational governance was thought to "stimulate individual initiative, self-control; and a sense of citizenship" among the students to a far greater degree than was possible within the confines of the public school system.[17]

In the classroom, students were encouraged to "direct their own lives." School literature proclaimed that "Manumit will have no didactic, authoritarian 'teaching,' nor passive, obedient 'learning.' The faculty are friends and comrades, and seek to guide and encourage the students in their search for knowledge and creative expression." Seeds expressed a common progressive sentiment when she wrote that "interest is always the motive which stimulates the child to creative activity," and reports by Manumit teachers during the 1920s and early 1930s bear out the school's commitment to allowing student interests to help guide the curriculum.[18]

Relations between students and teachers in the Manumit community were also marked by cooperation. Manumit students and faculty participated jointly in a set of work groups referred to

at different times in the life of the school as "delegations," "committees," or "production units." Through participation in these groups, Manumit students gained practical experience in agriculture, carpentry, printing, clerical work, and craft work. The literature claimed that "[there] is a real educational value in the responsible performance of the necessary work of community living. Therefore the faculty and the students share alike in all the work essential to the upkeep of the school and the farm." Student participation in "socially productive labor" at Manumit was not, however, simply an adaptation of contemporary arguments in support of vocational education or manual training. It was seen as crucial to maintaining the "labor consciousness" of the school, a unique aspect of progressive education at Manumit that reflected its roots in the workers' education movement.[19]

When asked to describe the differences between "labor schools" and "progressive schools," Seeds responded that "all labor schools should be progressive schools, and vice versa," but admitted that Manumit's relationship to the labor movement was unusual among progressive alternative schools. In entering her response into the minutes of a Manumit Board of Directors meeting in 1930, she referred to a passage in the most recent school prospectus:

> Manumit School . . . is to be distinguished from other creative activity schools in one important respect. It aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, inspiration, and power necessary to establish a social order based on a proper appreciation of labor, to interpret the new education movement to the American labor movement, and to interest it in a revaluation of child education. In other words, it aims to become a laboratory school of the American labor movement.

Steeped in familiar "child-centered" thinking about the active role of the student in the learning process, Manumit was also closely allied during its first decade with the labor movement and

with the reconstructionist tradition in workers' education embraced by "progressive labor" institutions such as Brookwood Labor College.[20]

Manumit's alliance with the labor movement could be seen most clearly in the make-up of its governing body, the Executive Board of the "Manumit Associates." Labor leaders and labor educators such as A. J. Muste, Fannia M. Cohn, James H. Maurer, and Henry Linville, among others, worked alongside progressive educators such as Harold O. Rugg, William H. Kilpatrick, Agnes Sailer, Elizabeth Irwin, and Helen Parkhurst. Other activists and educators on the left also sat on Manumit's board during its first decade, including Solon De Leon of the Rand School of Social Science, Norman Thomas of the League for Industrial Democracy, and Alexis Ferm of the Modern School at Stelton. Muste wrote that "the experiment of having labor men and women and the new educationalists co-operate in the running of a school . . . is an interesting and valuable one." He argued that neither progressive education, nor progressive labor could accomplish its ultimate goal of social reconstruction without the cooperation and success of the other. Any institution that "brings these two great social forces together," he continued, "[is] of high significance."[21]

Labor was represented not only on Manumit's governing board, but also in its student body. Seeds touched on a common criticism of progressive alternative schools when she noted that "[most] experimental schools have been started for the children of the well-to-do," but, as she had written elsewhere, "[it] was Bill Fincke's vision that Manumit School should offer this free type of education to the children of the workers, at a price which all could afford to pay." Perhaps alone among contemporary alternative schools, Manumit's student body was largely drawn from the children of the working class during its first decade: of 28 students enrolled in

the Spring of 1925, 20 were from working-class families; of 32 students enrolled in the Spring of 1928, 25 were from working-class families; and, of 56 students enrolled in the Spring of 1931, 41 were from working-class families.[22]

This working-class presence among the Manumit student body was facilitated not only by the school's ideological commitment to the labor movement, but also by its tuition policies. Working-class children attended Manumit on a sliding tuition scale. In the first of several letters to the American Fund for Public Service, a philanthropic organization sympathetic to both the labor movement and workers' education, Fincke noted that the cost to the school per student was $665 per year, but that the children of trade unionists were charged only $270 per year. Several families could not afford even that expense, he continued, and their children were attending the school at a further-reduced rate. This arrangement continued throughout Manumit's first decade. A financial report submitted to the Fund in 1930, for example, shows one student attending Manumit for free, another attending at a cost of $1,000 per year, and the majority attending at a cost of approximately $500 per year.[23]

Even these figures cannot fully explain the working-class presence in the Manumit student body, however, without noting the role of trade unions. Manumit's working-class students were supported in whole or in part directly by their parents' unions: in the Fall of 1925, 20 working-class children were being supported by 15 individual trade unions; in the Spring of 1928, 18 unions were supporting 25 students; and, in the Spring of 1931, 26 unions supported 41 students. Among the unions that directly sponsored working-class children at Manumit during the 1920s and early 1930s were the Amalgamated Food Workers, the Furriers' Union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the Postal Clerks' Union, and the American

Federation of Teachers.[24]

Manumit drew not only a commitment to educating the children of the working class from the labor movement and its tradition of workers' education, but also a commitment to working actively for social change. As Muste argued before the annual meeting of the Manumit Associates in 1931, maintaining a working-class presence on its Board and in its student body was not enough to make Manumit a "labor school." "If the school is to deserve the name of Labor," he argued, "it must have labor woven into its life, it must have a labor environment or atmosphere, it must look at life from the standpoint of labor rather than from the standpoint of exploitation of labor." As Altenbaugh has written, active pursuit of social change through the preparation of a generation of leaders capable of effecting social change was among the chief goals of the workers' education movement during the 1920s and early 1930s and Muste applied these same standards to the educational program at Manumit.[25]

Manumit students and teachers supported social change in a number of ways. Cleghorn describes Manumit students contributing a portion of their weekly meal money to radical causes, for example, the Scottsboro Boys' legal defense fund. Manumit students also participated in other left-wing cultural activities for children, for example, the Pioneer Youth. Manumit teachers left campus in order to further Fincke's vision of bringing progressive education to working-class children: in 1930, Manumit Board member Agnes Sailer traveled to Marion, North Carolina, to establish a progressive summer school for the children of striking workers; in 1936, Manumit teacher Paula Levinson helped a New York City Dressmakers' Union local incorporate progressive methods into its after-school programs for children. The most common description of "Manumit's contribution to social reconstruction," however, comes from Seeds, who

emphasized the need for educating children in a new way if they were to play an active part in social change as adults.[26]

The "future value" of today's children to tomorrow's movements for social change, Seeds argued, is "largely determined by their training and education." "Are we preparing our children," she asked, "to do a fair part in establishing a society based on justice and cooperation?" By acquainting children with pressing social issues and allowing them to address them through academic projects, by providing children with access to the political perspectives of labor and the left, and by structuring the life of the community around democratic participation both in educational governance and community maintenance, she concluded, Manumit was preparing a generation of children who would be capable of acting in support of social change as adults.[27]

The Manumit School had been founded in an environment of educational criticism that focused on the social class bias endemic to the public school system and to the ways in which the bias of that system reflected and helped to reproduce similar biases in American society. Long before progressive educators began asking if the school could help bring about a new social order, Manumit was practicing social reconstructionism. An early promotional flyer for the school asked parents if they wanted their children to grow up "to become men and women who can think for themselves, stand on their own two feet, and fight injustice and oppression?" By providing an atmosphere in which students could address (and even act upon) the social issues of the day, Manumit's founders hoped to contribute to the larger struggles being conducted by the labor movement and by other organizations on the left.[28]

Conclusion

While presenting a picture of his recently-founded school to a labor audience through the

pages of the journal, Labor Age, in 1925, William Fincke asked a simple question: "why should Labor be interested in developing a school such as Manumit?" Fincke drew on contemporary criticism of the public schools from the perspectives of both progressive education and workers' education to make his case for a school that adapted progressive educational methods to the social goals of the labor movement. I will conclude by asking a similar question: why should historians of education and of labor be interested in studying a school such as Manumit?[29]

First, the early history of the Manumit School suggests an important relationship between progressive education and workers' education. Nellie Seeds wrote that workers' education programs for adults were well-known, but that Manumit was "venturing into an hitherto untried field" by attempting to develop a progressive educational alternative for children that retained the ideological commitments familiar to workers' education. My review of the literature in workers' education suggests that the study of workers' education for children remains a relatively "untried field," and that a study of Manumit and of other union-sponsored educational programs for the children of members may add a new dimension to our understanding of the workers' education movement as a whole.[30]

Second, the practice of progressive education for working-class children at Manumit demonstrates a relationship between two aspects of the progressive education movement that are typically defined as distinct in the historiography of education: the "bohemianism" of the child-centered progressives and the "radicalism" of the social reconstructionists. Manumit, along with other "experimental" Progressive-era alternative schools, combined familiar, child-centered methods with a radical social agenda. I believe that the familiar distinction between "child-centered" alternatives such as the City and Country School and the Walden School and "radical"

alternatives such as the Modern School at Stelton and Manumit oversimplifies the experience of progressive educators such as Caroline Pratt, Margaret Naumburg, Elisabeth Irwin, Alexis Ferm, William Fincke, and Nellie Seeds. These distinctions between educational experiments considered to be part of the mainstream progressive education movement and those considered to be "radical" alternatives beyond the movement pale does not accurately describe the experience of students and teachers who moved easily between such schools during the Progressive era.[31]

The distinction between "child-centered" alternatives and "radical" alternatives in the historiography of progressive education can be traced, I believe, to Lawrence Cremin's use of Malcolm Cowley's definition of "bohemianism" and "radicalism" as two disparate streams in American radical thought during the Progressive era. As Christopher Lasch has argued, this distinction sets up a false dichotomy between the two "wings" of American radicalism that has negatively influenced radical thought in the United States throughout the twentieth century. Its influence can certainly be seen in the history of radical educational experimentation in America, where educational experiments have routinely been described as being either "political" (radical) or "apolitical" (bohemian).[32]

Recent studies of the social movements of the 1960s have challenged this way of thinking about the radical tradition in America. Seeing the establishment of alternative institutions such as communes, underground newspapers, and free schools as evidence of a commitment to what sociologist Wini Breines has called "prefigurative politics" and what historian Doug Rossinow has called "social radicalism," these studies suggest a broader approach to the study of the history of American radicalism than that which we have seen in the past. Alternative educational institutions like Manumit, which combined "bohemian" thinking about individual development

and child-centered teaching with "radical" thinking about social change, may provide an ideal means of approaching the study of "pre-figurative politics" or "social radicalism," not only in the postwar era, but throughout the twentieth century.[33]

Finally, Manumit suggests the appeal that reconstructionist thinking had for radical educators during the Progressive era. Historical analyses of social reconstructionism suggests that their ideas had a significant effect on educational thought, but little effect on educational practice. Schools like Manumit suggest the degree to which individual educators attempted to adopt reconstructionist ideas in their schools. Given the fact that Manumit's practice of reconstructionist education pre-dates Counts's famous call to arms by several years, they may also suggest the influence that pre-existing educational practices had on Counts's thinking. Studying schools like Manumit allows us a better view of the educational practices of students and teachers committed to promoting social change through radical experimentation in education.

Notes

1. George Lipzitz, Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s, rev. ed. (Urbana and Chicago, 1994), 1.

2. Robert J. Amman and Ronnie Silverblatt, "High School Students' Views on Unionism," Labor Studies Journal 12 (Winter 1987-88): 44-60; Dana Bramel and Clemencia Ortiz, "Tomorrow's Workers and Today's Unions: A Survey of High School Students," Labor Studies Journal 12 (Winter 1987-88): 28-43; Tom Juravich, "Anti-Union or Unaware?: Work and Labor as Understood by High School Students," Labor Studies Journal 16 (Fall 1991): 16-32; Jean Anyon, "Ideology and United States History Textbooks," Harvard Educational Review 49 (August 1979): 361-386; Frances Fitzgerald, America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the

Twentieth Century (New York, 1979); John H. Leffler, "The Treatment of American Workers in the Textbooks Most Frequently Used for Instruction in American History Courses in New Jersey Public Four-Year High Schools" (Ed.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1983). Among the many studies that demonstrate continuous concern with this issue from the Progressive era to the present are the following: Henry Harap, "The Labor Movement in the Curriculum," American Teacher 20 (March-April 1936): 8-9; Mark Starr, "The Worker, His Union, and the Public School," Progressive Education 9 (January 1942): 15-17; J. Richard Johnson, "Criteria for Evaluating the Public Schools from the Viewpoint of Organized Labor" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1953); Robert E. Doherty, Teaching Industrial Relations in High Schools: A Survey of Selected Practices (Ithaca, 1964); Will Scoggins, Labor in Learning: Public School Treatment of the World of Work (Los Angeles, 1966); and, Willard Hogeboom, "Labor Studies in the American History Curriculum," The Social Studies 66 (May-June 1975): 118-120. The most recent studies to include a consideration of the place of the labor movement in the curriculum are James W. Loewen, Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong (New York, 1995); and, Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn, History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past (New York, 1997).

3. Richard J. Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle: The American Labor Colleges of the 1920s and 1930s (Philadelphia, 1990), 10; Devere Allen, "A School for Workers' Children," The Nation 119 (15 October 1924), 417. Recent studies of alternative education movements in this spirit during the Progressive era include Paul Avrich, The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States (Princeton, 1980); and, Kenneth N. Teitelbaum, Schooling for "Good Rebels": Socialist Education for Children in the United States, 1900-1920 (Philadelphia, 1993).

4. Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 19. Representative studies of the era include Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York, 1961); Joel H. Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State (Boston, 1972); David B. Tyack, The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education (Cambridge,

1974); William J. Reese, Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grassroots Movements During the Progressive Era (Boston, 1986); and, Herbert M. Kliebard, The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958 (New York, 1987).

5. Philip R. V. Curoe, Educational Attitudes and Policies of Organized Labor in the United States (New York, 1926), 113, 181. On left-wing cultural and educational activities for children during this period, see, for example, Paul C. Mishler, "The Littlest Proletariat: American Communists and their Children, 1922-1950" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1988); and, Teitelbaum, Schooling for "Good Rebels". For a representative memoir of childhood participation in such activities, see Kim Chernin, In My Mother's House: A Daughter's Story (New York, 1983).

6. American Federation of Labor, Education for All: Official Record of the American Federation of Labor in the Struggle to Bring Knowledge to the Masses (Washington, D.C., 1922); American Federation of Labor, Labor and Education: Report of the American Federation of Labor Committee on Education on Social Studies in the Public Schools (Washington, D.C., 1923). Both reports are available in the "AFL Pamphlet Collection," George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

7. American Federation of Labor, Labor and Education, passim (quotations are from pp. 5-6, 24, 27). For information on the American Federation of Labor's activism in the field of educational reform during this era, see Curoe, Educational Attitudes and Policies of Organized Labor in the United States; Samuel J. McLaughlin, "The Educational Policies and Activities of the American Federation of Labor During the Present Century" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1936); and, John J. DeRolf III, "The Educational Philosophy of the American Federation of Labor and its Influence Upon the Social Studies Curriculum of the Secondary School" (Ed.D. diss., University of Nebraska, 1967).

8. Scott Nearing, "Who's Who on Our Boards of Education?," School and Society 5 (20 January 1917): 89-90; George S. Counts, The Selective Character of American Secondary Education

(Chicago, 1922); Horace M. Kallen, Education, the Machine, and the Worker: An Essay in the Psychology of Education in Industrial Society (New York, 1925); George S. Counts, The Social Composition of Boards of Education: A Study in the Social Control of Public Education (Chicago, 1927), 87. For an engaging, albeit non-scholarly, contemporary treatment of the same issues, see Upton Sinclair, The Goslings: A Study of the American Schools (Pasadena, 1924).

9. Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 19-55; Jon Bloom, "Workers' Education," in Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Dan Georgakas, eds., Encyclopedia of the American Left (New York, 1990), 849-850. See also Theodore Brameld, Workers' Education in the United States (Fifth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society) (New York, 1941).

10. Fannia M. Cohn, "Workers' Education for Workers' Children," Labor Age 15 (January 1926): 15.

11. American Federation of Labor, Labor and Education, 9.

12. Cohn, "Workers' Education for Workers' Children," 15-16; James H. Maurer, "Labor's Demand for Its Own Schools," The Nation 115 (20 September 1922), 277; Harold O. Rugg, "Do the Social Studies Prepare Pupils Adequately for Life Activities?," in Guy M. Whipple, ed., The Social Studies in the Elementary and Secondary School (Twenty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, part 2) (Bloomington, Illinois, 1923), 10-16; and, Harold O. Rugg, "Problems of Contemporary Life as the Basis for Curriculum-Making in the Social Studies," in Ibid., 260-273. The current dispute over the national history standards described in Nash, et al., History on Trial, is simply one example of the ongoing nature of this debate.

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14. Nellie M. Seeds, "William M. Fincke: The Founder of Brookwood and Manumit," Labor Age 16 (August 1927): 10-11; Sarah N. Cleghorn, Threescore: The Autobiography of Sarah N. Cleghorn (New York, 1936), 255-256. On the founding of Manumit, see also Allen, "A School for Workers' Children." On the role played by the Finckes' in the founding of Brookwood, see also Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 70-71.

15. Katherine Moos Campbell, "An Experiment in Education: The Hessian Hills School, 1925-1952" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1984); "Manumit School (n.d.)" [school prospectus], n.p., in "Manumit School" (organizational file), Tamiment Institute, Bobst Library, New York University, New York, New York (hereafter, "Manumit School file"); Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 59. For a discussion of the influence of communitarianism beyond the Progressive era, see, for example, Scott Walter, "The 'Flawed Parent': A Reconsideration of Rousseau's Emile and Its Significance for Radical Education in the United States," British Journal of Educational Studies 44 (September 1996): 260-274. For examples of familiar forms of progressive education at Manumit, see Cleghorn, Threescore, 259-280; and the reports of Manumit teachers published as part of the annual meetings of the "Manumit Associates," for example,"Learning Through Doing: Fifth Annual Conference of the Manumit Associates (June 1-3, 1928)", and "Creative Education at Manumit: Sixth Annual Conference of the Manumit Associates (June 1-2, 1929)."

16. William M. Fincke, in Stanwood Cobb, "The Delegates' Conference," Progressive Education 2 (July-September 1925): 172; Nellie M. Seeds, "Manumit's Contribution to Social Reconstruction," Progressive Education 8 (May 1931): 394.

17. "Manumit School (n.d.)," [school prospectus], n.p., in "Manumit School file"; Cleghorn, Threescore, 227; "Manumit School (n.d.)" [school prospectus], n.p., in "Manumit School file." For discussions of Manumit that focus on this aspect of its educational program, see, for example, Cobb, "The Delegates' Conference," 168-178; William M. Fincke, "Elsie Wins a Point, and We Get a View of Manumit," Labor Age 14 (November 1925): 8-9, 29; and, Nellie M. Seeds, "Democracy in the Making at Manumit School," The Nation 124 (1 June 1927), 608-609.

18. "Manumit School (n.d.)," [school prospectus], n.p., in "Manumit School file"; Nellie M. Seeds, "Labor's Laboratory School," The Survey (15 June 1927), 335. Reports by teachers in the different subject areas can be found in the proceedings of the annual meetings of the Manumit Associates. See also teacher and student reports in the "Manumit Year Book (1927)," in "Manumit School file."

19. "Manumit School (n.d.)," [school prospectus], n.p.

20. "Board of Directors Meeting, November 10, 1930" [minutes], 3, in American Fund for Public Service Papers, New York Public Library, New York, New York (hereafter, "AFPS Papers"), Box 28, "Gifts, 1928-1933: Manumit"; "Manumit School (1929)" [school prospectus], n.p., in "Manumit School file"; Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 70-81.

21. A. J. Muste to American Fund for Public Service, 23 February 1925, in AFPS Papers, Box 15, "Gifts, 1928-1933: Manumit." The list of names of members of Manumit's governing board was assembled from examples of school letterhead from throughout the decade.

22. Seeds, "Labor's Laboratory School," 334; Seeds, "William M. Fincke," 11; William M. Fincke to American Fund for Public Service, 25 February 1925, in AFPS Papers, Box 15, "Gifts, 1922-1927: Manumit"; "Learning Through Doing," 11; "Educational Groundwork for a Changing Social Order: Eighth Annual Conference of the Manumit Associates (May 30-31, 1931), 14-15, in "Manumit School file."

23. William M. Fincke to Roger N. Baldwin (Secretary, American Fund for Public Service), 8 September 1924, in AFPS Papers, Box 15, "Gifts, 1922-1927: Manumit"; "Board of Directors Meeting, November 10,1930" [minutes], 2.

24. William M. Fincke to Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (Secretary, American Fund for Public Service), 9 October 1925, in AFPS Papers, Box 15, "Gifts, 1922-1927: Manumit"; "Learning Through Doing," 11; "Educational Groundwork for a Changing Social Order," 14-15.

25. A. J. Muste, in "Educational Groundwork for a Changing Social Order," 43; Altenbaugh, Education for Struggle, 32.

26. Cleghorn, Threescore, 272; Cohn, "Workers' Education for Workers' Children," 16-18; Sailer, "A Play School for Strikers' Children"; Paula Levinson, "'Union' Puppets and Socio-Economics," Progressive Education 13 (October 1936): 469-474; Seeds, "Manumit's Contribution to Social Reconstruction."

27. Seeds, "Manumit's Contribution to Social Reconstruction," 394-396.

28. "Manumit School (n.d.)" [promotional flyer], in "Manumit School file."

29. Fincke,"Elsie Wins a Point, and We Get a View of Manumit," 9.

30. Nellie Seeds, "Manumit School and the Labor Movement," n.p., in "Manumit School file."

31. See, for example, Campbell's discussion of the "Association of Experimental Schools," of which Manumit, Hessian Hills, and the City and Country School, among others, were members during the 1930s (Campbell, "An Experiment in Education").

32. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, 201; Christopher Lasch, The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963: The Intellectual as Social Type (New York, 1965).

33. Wini Breines, Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968: The Great Refusal, rev. ed. (New Brunswick, 1989); Doug Rossinow, "The New Left and the Counterculture: Hypotheses and Evidence," Radical History Review 67 (Winter 1997): 79-120. For a similar approach to the study of the 1960s, see James P. Farrell, The Spirit of the Sixties: The Making of Postwar Radicalism (New York, 1997).

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